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**THE DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH ANNOUNCES \$336,000 IN GRANTS
TO ENSURE JUSTICE FOR CRIME VICTIMS WITH DISABILITIES**

The first program in the U.S. to focus on crimes against people with disabilities

Sacramento – The Director of the Department of Mental Health today announced \$336,000 in grants to Fresno, Los Angeles, Riverside, Sacramento, Siskiyou and Ventura counties to implement the first comprehensive state program in the nation to address the high rate of crime against people with disabilities. The purpose of the program is to improve the reporting, investigation, and prosecution of crimes against persons with disabilities.

“These programs will ensure that crimes against persons with disabilities are reported, investigated and prosecuted in a timely manner, and that victims with disabilities and their families get the support they need,” said Stephen W. Mayberg, Ph.D., Director of the Department of Mental Health.

The grants will enable local agencies to hire full-time Crime Victims with Disabilities Specialists to develop educational materials to ensure timely reporting and investigation of crimes against persons with mental, developmental and physical disabilities. The Crime Victims with Disabilities Specialists will also help law enforcement, prosecution and the courts to better understand the special needs of these victims.

The counties and Local agencies will receive three-year grants ranging from \$50,000 to \$69,000 each. Funding is provided in the 2000 Budget Act.

“This initiative will establish California as a national leader in this emerging field,” Dr. Mayberg said.

On March 1, 2001, the Department of Mental Health issued a Request for Application (RFA). The Department received 12 applications that were reviewed, scored and ranked, and six agencies were selected. The intent to award will be posted by the DMH. If there is no protest within five days, the grants will take effect.

See list of grant descriptions.

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